

הַ, הָ, הֶ, הֵ, הִ, definite article, **the**.

In gen. the use of the art. in Heb. is analogous to its use in Greek or German: but naturally there are applications peculiar to Hebrew.

1. joined with *substantives*:

a. to mark a definite concrete object. Never, however, before true proper names, though it is used with certain terms, chiefly geographical, of which the orig. appellative sense has not been lost, as הַבַּעַל 'Baal,' lit. 'the lord,' in pl.

הַבַּעַלִּים i.e. the various local Baals.

b. with an adjective to denote one who exhibits a quality, i.e. to express the compar. or superl. degree.

c. with nouns which are not definite in themselves, but *acquire their definition from the context, or from the manner in which they are introduced*: thus (α) in the standing phrases הַיּוֹם *to-day*; הַלַּיְלָה *to-night*, once *last night*; so הַשָּׁנָה *this year*; הַפֶּעַם *this time*. (β) הַנָּהָר *the river* = Euprates. Hence occas. where a suffix would define the noun more precisely, as הַחֲמֹר = *my ass*.

d. it is a peculiarity of Hebrew thought to conceive an object as defined by its being *taken for a particular purpose*, and thus by a kind of prolepsis to prefix the art. to the noun denoting it.

e. with nouns that denote *objects or classes of objects that are known to all*, as הַמַּיִם, הַזָּהָב, הַצֵּאֵן.

f. in *comparisons*, the object compared being, as a rule, not an individual as such, but one exhibiting the characteristics of a class. Where, however, the standard of comparison is not the class in general, but only a particular part of it, defined by a special epithet (whether adj. or verb), the art. is naturally omitted. Where the art. is

found, although a rel. clause follows, this is prob. to be regarded not as *limiting the class of object compared, but as describing it.*

g. prefixed to *generic* nouns (in the singular) it designates the *class*, i.e. it imparts to the noun a *collective* force.

h. with nouns denoting abstract ideas, esp. the names of moral qualities, chiefly in two cases— (α) where the art. is recognizable in the consonantal text, exceptionally, when some emphasis or definiteness is intended. (β) where the art. depends on the punctuation, after preps., esp. ׀, but with much irregularity. The Living language may have used the art. more readily after a prep., where it did not lengthen the word by an entire syll.; still the disparity of usage between α and β is in many cases not original but due to the punctuators.

i. to mark the *vocative*. N.B. In poetry, the article is frequently dispensed with before words which would naturally take it in prose.

2. With *adjectives, participles, and demonstrative pronouns* (הַמָּה, הַיָּא, הַוָּא, הַהֵם, זֶה, זֹאת, אֵלֶּה): viz. **a.** (so regularly) when the subst. qualified by these words is *defined by it likewise*; and with a pron., if it be defined by a gen., but not if it be defined by a sf. Similarly when the art. with the ptcp. has a *resumptive* force. **b.** (rare) when the subst. qualified by the adj. or ptcp. was felt to be sufficiently definite for its own art. to be dispensed with, as sts. with the word *day*; also in certain phrases where the subst. is defined by כֹּל; further in isolated cases, hardly reducible to rule. **c.** with the ptcp., where the ptcp. with the art. forms really the *subject*.

3. The article is prefixed exceptionally—mostly in the latest Hebrew—with the force of a relative to the *verb*.